Coleophora hydrolapathella Hering (Lep.: Coleophoridae) A Species New to the British Isles

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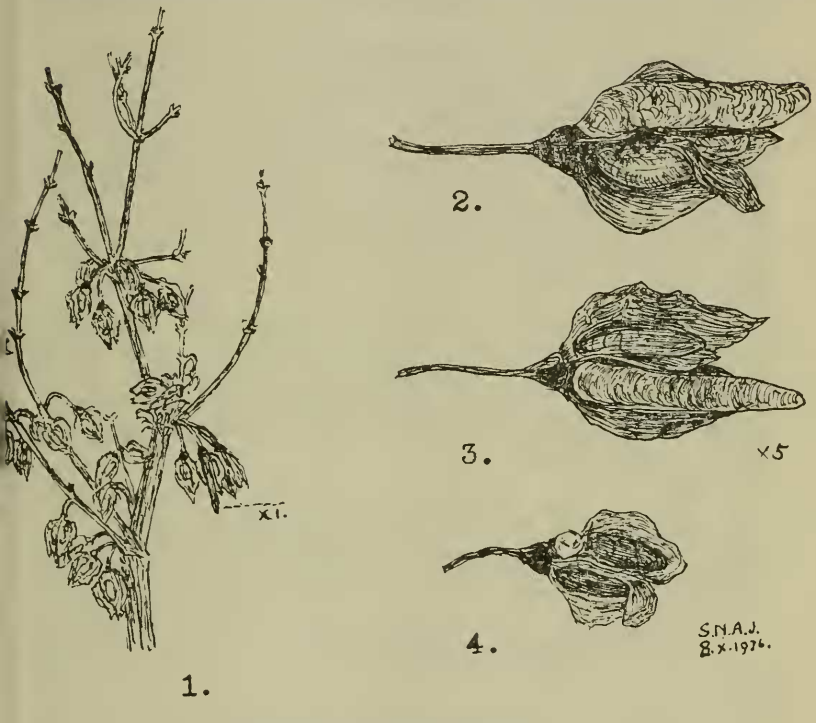
In early July 1975 while recording lepidoptera at Hickling Broad National Nature Reserve, four Coleophoridae were netted at dusk along a dyke wall. They were passed for identification to Mr. Raymond Uffen. One specimen was of an unfamiliar species, and after genitalia preparation and comparison with material in the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), Mr. Uffen determined the specimen as *Coleophora hydrolapathella* Hering, a species not previously recorded in the British Isles.



Coleophora hydrolapathella
Fig. 1. Case *in situ* (nat. size). Fig. 2. Case, lateral view (x 5). Fig. 3. Case, dorsal view (x 5). Fig. 4. Seed left by larva after feeding (x 5).

Reference to the description of the type showed that the case-bearing larva feeds on Great Water Dock, *Rumex hydrolapathum* Huds. In July 1976, Mr. Michael Chalmers-Hunt investigated plants of *R. hydrolapathum* at Hickling, and by tapping stems at dusk several further specimens were taken and a number of others seen. It was evident that not every plant was being used by the moth. To confirm the insect's breeding status, the seed heads of *R. hydrolapathum* were examined in October 1976. Cases were exceedingly difficult

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to see, tucked deep into the seeds, which clothe the dead flowering heads of the plant. Many had been parasitized, as shown by a minute round hole in midcase. Sufficient cases were noted in two hours searching to confirm the moth's widespread distribution at Hickling, though nowhere could it be called common. Of nine living cases taken personally, two moths were bred through, as well as parasites. In late July 1977, many adults were seen at dusk, and the emergence continued into the first week of August.

R. hydrolapathum is widely distributed in Broadland and was a plant that suffered particularly from the depredations of Coypu. It has recovered well. It favours dense mixed sedge and reed bed, with some standing water. The further distribution of the moth in Norfolk has not yet been investigated.

Original discovery and description of C. hydrolapathella

Hering (1921) discovered cases of the moth on withered stems of *R. hydrolapatum* on a frozen lake near Berlin in 1916. Only in 1921 did he breed the moth out, and then because he removed cases from the foodplant in May rather than in midwinter. There is no sign, however, that the larva feeds in the spring in this country. He described the case, and the moth, and the following description is based on a translation of his original paper in German.

The Case

A tube with three flaps to the anal end. It resembles *C. troglodytella* Dup., but is smaller and thinner. In colour it is dark red brown, with the anal end a granular dotted yellow brown. *C. troglodytella* is a light, uniform yellow-ochre in colour. Foodplant Great Water Dock, feeding and pupating on the seed heads.

The Adult

The head and thorax are light yellowish-brown ochre. The antennae are grey with white scaly hairs arranged in rings. This ringing is less marked at the base of the antenna. The palps, and the base of the forewings, are a glossy yellowish-white.

The abdomen is glossy grey, and the anal tuft and legs a glossy light yellowish-brown, similar to the colour of the head.

Wing venation is nearly the same as in *Coleophora troglodytella* Dup. The main point of difference is that in *C. hydrolapathella* the tip of the forewing is curved backwards.

The forewings are silky, light yellowish-brown on top, darkening towards the margin. The basal area is whitish-yellow. Occasionally the whole wing is a uniform pale glossy yellow. The hindwings are blackish-grey and shiny. Wing span is 12 mm.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to Madame Jeanne Ruvet and Mr. Anthony Warlow for translation; and to Mr. S. N. A. Jacobs for illustrating the larval cases here shown.

Reference

Hering, M. 1921. *Coleophora hydrolapathella* Mart. Hering, spec. nov. Eine Neue Kleinschmetterlingsart aus Deutschland. *Tijd. Ent.*, **64**: 179.

AMPHIMALLON OCHRACEUM KNOCH (COL.: SCARABAEIDAE): RECENT CAPTURES IN WALES AND SUSSEX, WITH A BRIEF SURVEY OF EARLIER RECORDS. — The above beetle has usually been considered very rare as a British species. Although less so now than formerly, and occasionally found in numbers at a particular time and place, it has a very restricted and discontinuous range and tends to be erratic and extremely localised. The recorded localities fall into five well-separated areas: N and S. Wales, N. Cornwall, the Berkshire Chilterns and the South Downs in E. Sussex.

In the early afternoon of 2nd July, 1971, in very warm sunny and windless conditions, a succession of these chafers was observed by Messrs. H. N. Michaelis and J. M. Chalmers-Hunt flying low over a limestone hillside covered with rock-rose in flower, above Llandudno Junction, Caerns.; one was brought to me by the latter entomologist. Further, Mrs. M. J. Morgan took one at Porth Ysgo on the Lleyn Peninsula, Caerns., flying low over vegetation at the side of the steep cliff path above the beach, at 4 p.m., 17.vii.69. Previous North Welsh records are of last century: Holyhead (Stevens and Brewer), and "North Wales" in plenty in 1855 (Weaver). In South Wales it has occurred at Tenby, both in earlier times (Capt. Parry) and some 20 years ago to Mr. Ernest Lewis.

In Cornwall, Dr. C. G. Lamb met with it in some numbers at Padstow in 1911, and there are examples in the B.M. (N.H.) labelled "North Cornwall/C. F. Woodforde" taken in the same year, and quite likely therefore at the same place.

In the past five years or so, the beetle has been taken on the E. Sussex downs: one near Birling Gap, Eastbourne, by Mr. R. D. Dumbrell, one at Wilmington by Mr. P. J. Hodge, and several near Newhaven by Mr. R. A. Jones very recently. These have not yet been positively identified as *A. ochraceum*, but I feel very little doubt about them since all were caught flying by day and the species is already known from that general area (Cuckmere Haven and Ditchling Downs, but rarely).

The late Dr. N. H. Joy found it in 1904 flying on a hillside at Streatley, Berks., in some quantity; and I have seen one or more taken by him at Aldworth, near Newbury. He gives an interesting account of its habits at the former place (1905, *Ent. mon. Mag.*, **41**: 16-18), with notes on its distinctions from the far more common crepuscular *A. solstitiale* L. Joy's suggestion (p. 17) that we may have a third species of *Amphimallon* in Britain — supported to some extent by Champion's appended note (p. 18) — has never, I believe, been followed up; it is the more plausible in that there are several other closely similar species in Europe. — A. A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London, SE7 8QG.